



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

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JAN 11 2008

Ravalli County Commissioners

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The Honorable Brian Schweitzer
Governor
State of Montana
Helena, Montana 59620-0801

Dear Governor Schweitzer:

Thank you for your letter of December 12, 2007, requesting a disaster designation for Ravalli County, Montana, due to losses caused by severe drought that occurred in 2007.

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) has reviewed the Loss Assessment Report, along with the additional information submitted by the State Executive Director, Farm Service Agency (FSA). Based on this review, USDA has determined that there were sufficient production losses to warrant a Secretarial disaster designation. Therefore, I am designating Ravalli County, Montana, as a primary natural disaster area due to losses caused by severe drought that occurred during the period January 1, 2007, and continuing.

In accordance with section 321(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, Beaverhead, Granite, and Missoula Counties, Montana, are named as contiguous disaster counties.

This designation makes farm operators in both primary and contiguous counties eligible to be considered for low-interest emergency loans from FSA, provided eligibility requirements are met. FSA will consider each application on its own merit by taking into account the extent of losses, security available, and repayment ability.

Local FSA offices can provide affected farmers with further information.

Sincerely,

Charles F. Conner
Acting Secretary